

Dr. Ambedkar As The Member of Executive Governor General Council Questions and Answers

PART III

From 14th September 1942 to 12th April 1946

81

Scheme for Cheap Grain Shops for Bengal and Bihar Colliery Labour

Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that in a communication to the Governments of Bengal and Bihar, the Labour Department of the Government of India proposed a scheme for the establishment of cheap grain shops in April 1942, for the benefit of colliery Labour ? If so, what response did the scheme meet with at the hands of the two Provincial Governments and of the organisations of the coal industry ?

(b) Has any effective action been taken by either of the two Provincial Governments as an alternative to the above scheme for ensuring a cheap supply of food grains to colliery Labour ? If so, on what lines, and when ?

(c) What action, if any, has been taken by the organisations of the coal industry or by individual collieries for the supply of cheap food grains to Labour; and what help, if any, has been rendered by either of the two Provincial Governments to them in the matter ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : (a) Yes. The Bihar Government considered that other methods of dealing with the problem were preferable. No reply was received from the Bengal Government.

(b) So far as the Central Government's information goes both the Provincial Governments have through their total officers taken all possible steps to ensure a supply of food grains at cheap rates to colliery Labour.

(c) It is not understood what the Honourable Member means by cheap food grains. The principal Employers' Organisations in the coal industry made arrangements to supply food grains at reasonable prices to their Labour. The Provincial Governments assisted them in obtaining food grains.

Mr. **K. C. Neogy** : I am afraid I have not received a reply to the second part, clause (b), of my question, viz., " Has any effective action been taken by either of the two Provincial Governments : if so, on what lines and when ?"

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As I said, they helped them to secure food supplies.

Mr. **K. C. Neogy** : But exactly in what way ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They helped them in getting them.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : But in what way was that help rendered, because we have instances in which there was actual hindrance ?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : What steps have the colliery owners taken to supply food to their Labour ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As I said, they maintained stocks and were also helped by the provincial Governments to maintain them.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to an instance in which certain stocks of rice which certain colliery owners acquired for their collieries were actually commandeered by the Government and a complaint to that effect was made by them to the Provincial Governments and here ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no such information.

82

The War Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Bill Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to impose on employers a liability to pay compensation to workmen sustaining war injuries and to provide for the insurance of employers against such liability.

83

The Indian Boilers (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Boilers Act, 1923.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Boilers Act, 1923. " The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

84

The Mines Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941." The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

85

The Motor Vehicles (Drivers) Amendment Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Motor Vehicles (Drivers) Ordinance, 1942.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Motor Vehicles (Drivers) Ordinance, 1942." The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

86

Unsatisfactory Arrangements for Accommodation of Assembly at Simla

61. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is not the duty of the Estate Officer, Central Public Works Department, to arrange for the accommodation of the Member of the Assembly when they are wanted temporarily at Simla for attending Committee meetings ?

(b) Is it not their duty to see that the Members are not put to any inconvenience on account of light or bad arrangements for accommodation ?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that the Cart Road quarters which were set apart for the Assembly Members viz., 2, 3 and 11 during the Hindu Law Committee Sittings were more inconveniently arranged in comparison with No. 20 ? Is the Honourable Member prepared to enquire into the matter of selecting these quarters for the Assembly Members by the Estate Officer during Committee meetings in May and June ?

(d) Will the Honourable Member consider changes in the arrangements in these quarters after proper enquiries ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The Estate Officer's duty is to allot such accommodation to the Members of the Central Legislature as is specified by Government in consultation with the House Committee.

(b) All the quarters are planned so as to avoid, as far as possible, any inconvenience to Members.

(c) The quarters on the Cart Road were built according to approved plans. Quarters Nos. 2 and 3 are on the highest level and were reserved for the Members in consultation with the House Committee of the Legislature, as they were considered to be very conveniently situated. The arrangement of the rooms in Nos. 2 and 3 differs slightly from that of the rooms in No. 20. Some Members consider a particular arrangement of the rooms in a house convenient irrespective of the level of the house, while others may prefer quarters at a higher level irrespective of the arrangement of the rooms. It cannot therefore, be said that quarters Nos. 2 and 3 are more inconveniently arranged than No. 20. No. 11 was not occupied by any Member of the Legislature, as it was exchanged for No. 20. In the circumstances explained, no special enquiry is called for.

(d) As already stated, the quarters for the Members of the Legislature were reserved in consultation with the House Committee of the Legislature. No changes seem necessary unless the House Committee expresses a desire for them.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : May I ask if the Members who attended the Sub-Committee meetings in Simla were asked to deposit a sum of Rs. 75

as security before they could get electricity and water ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I must have notice of that question.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Does the Honourable Member know that Members have been asked to deposit money here in Delhi ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :** I have no idea.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : May I ask if there is any officer appointed to go round these quarters and look to the comforts of the Members ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** I have no idea.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member then appoint some officer?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I will make inquiries in the matter.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea : How many meetings of the House Committee are held during every Session ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is for the House Committee to decide how many times they should meet.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea : Have you any information on the subject ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I remember there was a meeting of the House Committee during the last Session.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : May I know if some of the Members of the House Committee have died and have they been replaced by some other Members?

The Honourable Dr. B.R. Ambedkar : I am very sorry to hear the news but I am sure the house will take such steps as are necessary to fill the vacancy.

87

Provision of a Rickshaw Stand at the Cart Road Quarters, Simla

62. **Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya :** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if Cart Road quarters in Simla are kept for occupation by the Members of the Central Legislature ? If so, does he propose to ask the Municipal Committee of Simla (i) to set up a Rickshaw Adda near about the quarters for the convenience of the Members ; and (ii) not to charge security deposit for temporary occupation of the quarters by the Assembly Members for electric light ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As the Members occupy a very limited number of quarters on the Cart Road for short periods at a time, Government do not feel justified in approaching the Simla Municipal Committee for the provision of a rickshaw stand in the totality. The supply of electric energy in Simla is the concern of the Simla Municipal Committee and Government regret they are unable to interfere with the Municipal arrangements in this respect.

Water Supply in New Delhi and Delhi

66. **Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** ; (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the arrangements that have been made for the supply of sufficient water for all purposes in New Delhi and Delhi itself to remove the inconvenience caused by the scarcity of water in these very hot days ?

(b) Is it a fact that the Jumna river bed was being straightened to get water to the pumps ? If so, how far has that scheme progressed, and will the water brought therefrom be sufficient for all purposes in both Delhi and New Delhi ?

(c) What arrangements are proposed to be made to cool the water which in these summer days gets too hot in the pipes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) In order to improve the supply of filtered water, five additional filters were installed this summer, and two large pumping sets have been ordered from England and are expected in India in October. The scarcity of unfiltered water was due to a sudden fall in the level of the Jumna. In order to raise the level of the water, a series of bunds was put up across the channel. The situation has since improved and there is now no shortage.

(b) Experiments for training the river so as to divert its dry weather channel along the right bank, on which the pumping station is situated, are being conducted at the Central Hydro-dynamic Research Station, Poona. A committee of experts recently appointed to investigate the matter have submitted their report which is being examined.

(c) No arrangements for cooling the water are feasible.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Why is it not feasible ? Is it because it is too cold here?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member is entitled to draw his own conclusions.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Is it unusually cold here ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I leave my Honourable friend to draw his own conclusions.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra : Why don't you utilise the Defence of India Act for this purpose.

89

Muslim Assistant Estate Officers in Central Public Works Department

71. **Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh Bhutto** : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state the number of Assistant Estate Officers in the Central Public Works Department ? (b) How many of them are Musalmans ? (c) Is the ratio of Muslims maintained ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Four; one post being vacant at present.

(b) None.

(c) Not at present, but the ratio of Muslims will soon be adjusted as the

Federal Public Service Commission has been asked to recruit a Muslim for the Vacant post.

90

Construction of New Buildings at Ghaziabad

72. **Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if his attention has been drawn to the leading article in Dawn of the 29th June, 1943, under the caption " Thick Waste "? If so, what is the reason for building these houses at Ghaziabad and not near about New Delhi?

(b) Is it a fact that, these houses will be temporary constructions for the period of war ? If so, is he aware that accommodation for the Gazetted personnel of the Government of India is inadequate in New Delhi? If so, why do not Government propose to construct houses which may be of use to the Gazetted staff after the war ?

(c) What use will Government make of the houses at Ghaziabad if these are not required by the Defence Department after the war ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. But the facts stated in the article are not entirely correct.

(b) and (c). The matter is under consideration, and no definite decision has been reached.

91

Scheme of Sickness Insurance for Industrial Workers

127. **Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh Bhutto :** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if the Scheme of Sickness Insurance for Industrial Workers has been completed ?

(b) When is the Scheme expected to come into operation ?

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to lay on the table a copy of the Scheme ?

(d) Is it also proposed to lay on the table the opinions expressed by Provincial Governments on the Scheme ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No.

(b) The Government of India have appointed a Special Officer to prepare a draft scheme of Sickness Insurance for workers in selected industries. The scheme is now under preparation but it is not possible at this stage to say when it will come into operation.

(c) and (d) These points will be considered later on. Legislation will be necessary, and the House will of course be fully informed of the details of the scheme.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : How far has the scheme been completed ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :** A preliminary report has been received.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : When approximately is this going to be completed ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot say anything about it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Say two years or one year ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Within two months' time.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Thank you.

92

Fixing Rents Lower than Pre-war Rental Value in Babar Road Area

132. **Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware:

(i) that rents for middle class tenement houses in the Babar Road Area have been fixed by the Rent Controller at Rs. 42-8-0 per mensem from the 1st July, 1942 ; and

(ii) that this rent is less than the rental value of Rs. 560 per annum assessed by the New Delhi Municipal Committee for levying house-tax on these houses ever since 1938-39 ?

(b) What are the grounds for fixing the rents lower than the pre-war rental value as assessed by the New Delhi Municipal Committee in 1938-39 ?

(c) How do Government justify the levy of house-tax at an excessive rate for all these years ?

(d) If the assessment was not excessive, how do Government justify the order of the Rent Controller ?

(e) Is he aware that the house-owners in this area are mostly middle class people who have been hit hard by this arbitrary decision of the Rent Controller ?

(f) What rents are fixed by the Rent Controller for houses having approximately a similar residential accommodation near the Pusa Road in Qarol bagh Area, and in any other composite area in New Delhi ?

(g) Is he aware that while controlling rents of houses in Calcutta, the Bengal Government have allowed an increase of ten per cent. in rents over the rents prevailing in 1941 ?

(h) Does he propose to allow a similar increase in rents in New Delhi ? If not, why ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) (i). There are several different classes of tenements in the Babar Road Area carrying different rents. The rent of Rs. 42-8-0 is for one class tenements only. (ii) Yes.

(b) The rents are fixed under clause 8 of the Delhi House Rent Control Order, 1939, under which the Rent Controller has to fix the fair rent of a house having regard to the prevailing rates of rents for the same or similar accommodation in similar circumstances during the twelve months prior to the 1st September, 1939. (c) This is not a matter for Government.

(c) In view of the reply to part (b) above, the question does not arise.

(e) Yes, but Government have no reason to believe that the house-owners have been hit hard.

(f) There are no houses in Qarol bagh having the same or similar accommodation.

(g) I have no official information on the point.

(h) No, Government do not see any justification for it.

Sardar Sant Singh : Will the Honourable Member make inquiries as to the difference in rental value assessed by the New Delhi Municipal Committee and the rent which is allowed to the owner and see that some justice is done to the landlords and the rents are increased ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot do that, because the fair rent is fixed by the officer. There is no reason to suppose that his judgement is in any way miscarried by any circumstances which he ought not to take into account.

93

Prohibition of Constructions Involving Use of Cement, Steel and Timber

135. **Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi** : (a) In view of the Government order announced in some places by beat of drums prohibiting constructions of all descriptions involving the use of cement, steel and timber, will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state whether this order applies to constructions which are nearing completion and do not require cement, steel and teak wood ?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the negative, will the owners of such premises be granted permission for making and fitting the requisite panels for doors and wood-sashes for windows out of mango wood and other materials already in their possession, provided that the authorities are satisfied after verification that all the materials required are already in their stock ?

(c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, do Government propose to issue instructions to that effect to all provinces ? If not, will all constructions, irrespective of whether they involve the use of cement, steel and timber, be kept in abeyance now ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) to (c) In order to curtail the demand for Labour and materials and to check inflationary tendencies, the Government of India have asked the Provincial Governments to do what they can to discourage the construction of buildings, etc., by total bodies and private persons. These are general instructions and the Provincial Governments are at liberty to give effect to them in whatever manner they consider suitable having regard to the conditions prevailing in the Province. I would therefore suggest that the Member approaches the Provincial Government whose orders he desires to have clarified.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : May I know if these things have been prohibited because they are being supplied for war purposes or they have been prohibited for some other reason ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : For war purposes.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi : May I inform the Honourable Member that the District Magistrate of Mathra has refused permission to an Honourable Member of this House to complete his house. He wanted to put in only 22 panels of mango and 22 panels for doors. That was the only thing to be done, but the District Magistrate refused to give the permission.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang) : That is a statement of facts and not a question.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am glad to receive the information.

Sir Abdul Halim **Ghuznavi** : Is it a fact that the Commissioner of Agra Division was approached in this connection and he said that if the gentleman concerned could convince the District Magistrate that he already had in his possession the necessary wood to complete the house, he would give him the sanction. He convinced the District Magistrate that he had the necessary wood in his possession and yet he refused to give him the permission.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): Again it is a statement and not a question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : May I know if the half-completed house or three-fourths completed houses have also been prohibited from being built?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on the point.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Have any exceptions been made in this matter?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: We have given general instructions to the provinces.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : They have not been given any discretion ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am sure the discretion will be exercised with due care.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Then the Central Government has not given any instructions yet ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot say at this stage.

Cost of Raising Buildings in New Delhi and Simla Connected with War Activities

144. **Sardar Sant Singh**: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the total cost incurred by the Government of India in raising buildings in New Delhi and Simla, separately, connected with the War activities since September 1939 ? Was any expense incurred on behalf of Americans ? If so, how much, and who met it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The following expenditure had been incurred up to the end of March 1943 : (i) New Delhi—Rs. 1,55,14,629. (ii) Simla—Rs. 24,65,137. (iii) On behalf of Americans—Rs. 38,47,916. (This has been debited to Defence Services Estimates under Reciprocal

Lease/Lend arrangements.)

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan : May I know if after the war all these temporary buildings will be demolished ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

Sardar Sant Singh : Which Government meets the expenditure of Rs.38,47,916 on Americans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The government of India under the reciprocal Lease/Lend arrangements.

Sardar Sant Singh : Will this expenditure on the tax-payers of India be later on debited to the accounts ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Notice.

95

Factories Adversely Affected by the Former Standard Time

151. **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state which factories (and in which part of the country) were adversely affected by the former standard time which used to be observed in India ?

(b) What is the number of such factories, and what is the estimated amount of loss to those factories caused by the keeping up of the standard time ?

(c) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of restoring the old standard time ? If so, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Government have no information that factories in any part of India were adversely affected by the former standard time.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The reply to the first part is in the negative. The reasons for the advance of time have been explained by Government in a Press communique a copy of which is laid on the table of the House. No grounds have been shown for a restoration of the old standard time.

Press Communique

The existence of two different standards of time in India is for purposes of defence undesirable and since the 15th May this year a uniform standard time has been observed throughout the country. In deciding what that standard should be the Government have had to consider on the one hand the convenience of that portion of India which lies to the West of meridian 82 1/2 and already enjoys sufficient daylight saving and on the other the requirements of the eastern Provinces where it is essential to avoid any electricity overload due to overlap of factory demands with those of domestic, office and street lighting and where extra daylight may be needed to mitigate the effect of obstruction. Since in the summer months there is an adequate margin of daylight in the eastern areas, it was considered that by an adjustment of office and factory hours the requirements of those areas during

the summer could be adequately met if Standard Time were fixed at 5 1/2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time throughout India and a uniform time was introduced accordingly as from the 15th May. The Government of India undertook, however, to consider the question of a further change before the winter season commenced. It has now been decided that to insure the continuance of sufficient daylight in the eastern Provinces it is necessary to make such a change in the near future, and that Indian Standard Time throughout the country should be 6 1/2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. The change will take effect from midnight on the 31st August—1st September from which date clocks will be advanced by one hour. It is fully realised that the advance of clocks by one hour must inevitably cause some inconvenience to areas lying west of meridian 82 1/2 but it is believed that by an adjustment of hours of work, this inconvenience can be overcome and that when the public becomes accustomed to the new time no great difficulty will be experienced.

96

Fall in Output of Coal

28. **Mr. K. C. Neogy** : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that since January, 1943, the output of coal in British India has gone down ? If so, did Government make any enquiry about the reason for this fall in output, and what practical steps do Government propose to take to improve the situation ?

(b) Is it a fact that the stock of coal was much less at collieries in British India on the 31st of May, 1943, than the stock that was reported to exist on the 31st of December, 1942 ? If so, what are the reasons for such a deterioration ?

(c) Is it a fact that sufficient number of wagons was not available between the 1st January, 1943, and 31st of May, 1943, even to carry away the raisings of that particular period ? If so, what is the explanation for the reduction in the stock ?

(d) Is it a fact that about 30 collieries in the Kajora field in the Province of Bengal with a raising of approximately over ten lakhs of tons a year, are going to be shut down for want of wagon facilities due to the military authorities using the portion of the line serving these collieries, although it is possible to carry the military goods from the Ondal Junction by the military lorries ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No. The second part of the question does not arise.

(b) The stock figures reported to exist on the 31st December, 1942, are not reliable. Improved methods of collecting figures of stocks have since been introduced. It is believed that stocks have not deteriorated but increased between 31st December, 1942, and 31st May, 1943.

(c) Answer to the first part is in the affirmative. Answer to the second part is in the negative.

(d) No. Kajora field is worked by several pilots. It is presumed that the question refers particularly to the area worked by Okhra Nos. 1 and 2 Pilots. Approximately 30 collieries are worked by these two Pilots. The capacity for coal of these two Pilots is 100 wagons which represents approximately 2,000 tons of coal per day or 7,20,000 tons per annum. Both these Pilots have been getting preferential supplies of wagons as they have large orders from B and A Railway. With the wagon position as at present prevailing in the Bengal and Bihar fields, it is extremely unlikely that even if the capacities of these Pilots were increased the collieries would get more than 100 wagons a day. For the Military Depot 20 wagons in the capacity of Okhra No. 2 Pilots have been provided, but as explained above this arrangement is not likely to cause these collieries to shut down. The Government of India are not aware whether the military can carry goods from Ondal Junction by military lorries.

97

Concessions re Oil Resources in British India to British or American Firms

30. **Mr. K. C. Neogy** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to refer to starred question No. 441, dated the 30th March, 1943, and lay on the table a statement giving the names of British or American firms that may have secured concessions (including exploration or prospecting licences) in respect of the potential oil sources in any part of British India, together with a summary of the principal terms and conditions thereof in each case ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the statement placed on the table of the House today giving the information promised in answer to the supplementary on question No. 441, dated the 30th March, 1943.

98

Summary of Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the Standing Labour Committee

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I lay on the table a copy of the Summary of Proceedings of the third meeting of the Standing Labour Committee held on the 7th and 8th May, 1943.

99

Sikhs in High Salaried Posts in the Central Public Works Department

209. **Sardar Sant Singh**: Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the number of posts carrying salaries of Rs. 400 per mensem or over in the Central Public Works Department and in Sections other than the Central Public Works Department ? How many of these posts are held by Sikhs ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: There are 60 posts on salaries rising to Rs. 400 or more and 82 posts on salaries of Rs. 400 and upwards. Of the total of 142 posts, 6 are held by Sikhs.

It is not understood to which office the Member refers by the words '

Sections other than the Central Public Works Department.

100

Establishment Branch of the Office of the Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department

210. **Sardar Sant Singh** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member kindly state if it is a fact that a separate Branch to deal with establishment matters and to facilitate the work of selection board in the office of the Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department, was set up recently ?

(b) What is the total number of staff working in this Branch, and how many of them are Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs ?

(c) Is it a fact that none of the members of the staff including the Superintendent has any experience of establishment matters ?

(d) Why were not experienced people already working in the Establishment Branch considered suitable for employment in this Branch ?

(e) Is it a fact that establishment matters of the Muslim personnel are dealt with quickly while those of other communities lie unattended to for an indefinite period ?

(f) Do Government propose to investigate an enquiry into the communal work done by this Branch?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Total No. of staff 12

Hindus	5
Muslims	6
Sikhs	Nil
Indian Christians	1

(c) No ; two assistants and three clerks were taken from the Establishment Branches.

(d) More staff could not be removed from the Establishment Branches without detriment to the work there.

(e) No.

(f) No.

101

Representations Against the Appointment of One Bakshi Madan Singh in the Central Public Works Department

211. **Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that one Bakshi Madan Singh was appointed as an Assistant in the Works Section, Central Public Works Department, against a vacancy reserved for ' other minorities ' ?

(b) Was he asked at the time of recruitment to produce a certificate as to the bonafides of his being a Sikh in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Home Department ? If not, why not ?

(c) Are Government aware that Bakshi Madan Singh has been " Petit " 3 or 4 times before he joined service, and that he kept hair to deceive the Government to get a job reserved for the Sikh Community ?

(d) Is it a fact that a number of representations were made to the Additional Chief Engineer and the administrative Officer by the total Sikh organisations and none of these has even been acknowledged so far?

(e) Do Government propose to replace this person by a bonafide Sikh?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) No. The Department had no doubts as to his bonafide at the time of his appointment.

(c) No. Government had no information to this effect.

(d) Yes. They are being acknowledged.

(e) Only, if it is established that he embraced Sikhism within a year of his application for employment, or being a Keshdhari had become palit before his employment.

102

Commercial Aspects of Indian Spring-Waters

50. **Mr. K. C. Neogy** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to refer to the unstirred question No. 92, dated the 30th March 1943, and make a statement:

(a) explaining whether the commercial aspects of the Indian spring-waters referred to therein have been examined, and whether the arrangements to bottle the waters for trial have been completed ; and

(b) indicating the location of the different springs which have so far been tried and found satisfactory ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The commercial aspects of Indian spring-waters are still under examination. The arrangements to bottle the waters for trial are complete.

(b) The springs occur on private land, as negotiations are still in progress with the proprietor of the land. Government do not consider it desirable to disclose the location of the springs at this stage.

103

Survey of Hydro-Electric Possibilities in India

274. **Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari** (on behalf of Mr. R. R. Gupta) :(a) Will the Honourable member for Labour be pleased to state if Government have directed a survey of Hydro-electric possibilities in this country ? If so, when was the survey last carried out, and by whom ?

(b) Do not Government consider that, in view of the generally accepted policy of conservation of India's better class coal resources, hydro-electric developments should be actively encouraged, particularly in the United Provinces, the Punjab and the Central Indian States, which are situated away from the sources of India's coal supply ? If so, in what form do Government propose to encourage such development ?

(c) What is the installed generating capacity of the State Hydroelectric schemes developed by the United Provinces and the Punjab Governments, Native States like Mysore and Travancore, and the Tatas in Bombay, and what is the unabsorbed load available from these schemes at present?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to lay on the table a statement showing from their latest data the possible head works site of the new hydro-electric schemes in India, together with the power likely to be obtained from each of the generation schemes ?

(e) Have Government thought out any possibility of converting Railways to be driven electrically in those totalities where cheap power can be obtained ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) A brief survey of major hydro-electric possibilities throughout India was made about the end of 1941 by the Electrical Commissioner with the Government of India ;

(b) Promotion of hydro-electric schemes is primarily the concern of Provincial Governments and States. The Central Government is, however, fully alive to the desirability of hydro-electric development and the post-war organisation of the electricity supply industry including hydro-electric development is engaging the attention of the Reconstruction Committee of Council.

(c) and (d) During war-time it is not in the public interest to publish the information asked for. In any case, as already stated, the promotion of hydro-electric schemes is primarily the concern of the Provincial Government and States.

(e) Yes, the question has been considered from time to time and is always kept in view, but the availability of cheap power is only one of the factors which would determine the conversion of a particular section to electric traction.

104

Inclusion of certain Details in the Working of the Payment of Wages Act

289. **Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that the Report on the working of the Payment of Wages Act on Railways does not indicate the particulars of the applications presented to and disposed of by the authorities appointed under the Payment of Wages Act ?

(b) If the reply to part (a) be in the affirmative, does he propose to take steps for the inclusion of the particulars of the applications with a review thereon in the next reports ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) At present what the Honourable Member suggests is a fact.

(b) I shall consider the suggestion.

105

Sulphur Mined in Baluchistan and Firms Supplied with Sulphuric

Acid Manufacturing Plants

290. **Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari** (On behalf of Mr. R. R. Gupta) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the quantity of sulphur mined in Baluchistan by the Utilisation Branch of the Geological Survey of India, and the total amount so far spent in such mining operations ?

(b) Is it a fact that the deposit of sulphur in the present site of mining in Baluchistan, available for further exploration, is small ? In any case, what is the estimated tonnage of the unworked deposit at the moment?

(c) Is it a fact that the Department of Supply has notified the sugar mill concerns in India that no supply of sulphur can be arranged for the mills in connection with the next crushing season ? If so, what is the reason for such a notice being given to the sugar mills ? If no such notice has been given, how were supplies of sulphur secured for the sugar mills in the last two crushing seasons, and how is it proposed to arrange the supply during the next ?

(d) Is it a fact that a large quantity of sulphur-dioxide (SO₂) gas is wasted as a by-product in connection with the operation of copper smelting furnace in India ? If so, is it a fact that such gaseous waste can be easily converted into sulphuric acid ? Did Government examine the possibility of such a source of supply of sulphuric acid, and, if so, with what result ?

(e) Is it a fact that since the outbreak of the war, the Department of Supply imported a number of sulphuric acid manufacturing plants ? If so, what is the number of such plants, and how have they been disposed of ? Do Government propose to lay on the table a statement showing the firms to whom such plants, if any, have been made available, and the special reason for which the plants were supplied to them in each case ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) It is not in the public interest to state the quantity of sulphur mined. The total amount so far spent on Baluchistan Sulphur Operations is Rs. 11,85,000.

(b) No. It is not in the public interest to disclose the estimated tonnage of unworked deposits.

(c) No. Supplies of sulphur for the sugar industry during the last crushing season were met partly from American imports and partly by depletion of reserve stocks. Sugar mills are being supplied with Baluchistan sulphur ore which they will refine individually or alternatively have refined at a central plant set up with Government sanction and the resultant pure sulphur will be used in the sugar mills during the crushing season. Any deficit on estimated requirements will be met from American imports arranged by the Supply Department.

(d) Sulphur dioxide is produced as a by-product during the smelting of copper in India. It occurs in the flue gases in a highly diluted form with other gases and its efficient conversion into sulphuric acid is difficult. The possibility of using this source of supply for production of sulphuric acid and sulphur was

examined very early in the war but was not proceeded with as the processes called for the import of complicated and expensive machinery with technical personnel and even then successful recovery was problematic.

(e) No. Full information regarding the proposed import of plants from America was given by the Honourable the Supply Member in answer to unstarted question No. 47 on 4th August 1943.

106

Lead Mine in Jawar in Udaipur State

291. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (on behalf of Mr. R. R. Gupta) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that a lead mine is being worked in Jawar in the Udaipur State by the Utilisation Branch of the Geological Survey of India ? If so, what is the amount of money spent so far in the working of this mine, and what is the average percentage of lead and zinc occurring in the ores extracted from this mine ?

(b) Have Government any information or lead deposits occurring in any other part of India, and, if not, what fraction of India's lead requirements is likely to be met from Jawar source alone ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. A sum of Rs. 6 1/2 lakhs has been spent upto the end of June 1943. The average percentage found in exploration up to date is 2 percent lead and 8 per cent zinc.

(b) Yes, the most likely occurrences known at present are at Chauth-ka-Barwara in Jaipur State.

107

Wolfram Deposits Discovered in a Bengal District

292. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (on behalf of Mr. R. R. Gupta) : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that some wolfram deposits have been discovered by the Geological survey of India in a Bengal District ? If so, what is the quantity of wolfram so far won from this source, and how has it been disposed of?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes. During war-time it is not in the public interests to disclose the quantity of wolfram won. The ore is disposed of through the Supply Department (Directorate-General, Munitions Production).

108

Functions of the Labour Welfare Advisers and Labour Advisers

297. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the functions of the Labour Welfare Advisers and Labour Advisers appointed in the Labour Department ?

(b) How many such officers have been appointed so far ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The functions of the Labour Welfare Advisor and his Deputy and Assistants are to report to Government and advise on all such matters relating to the welfare of industrial Labour in India as Government may direct.

The duties of the Labour Adviser were to advise on all important matters of Labour legislation and administration, and in particular the manner in which Labour problems that were under consideration or might arise had been or were being dealt with in England.

(b) There is one Labour Welfare Adviser, one Deputy Labour Welfare Adviser and 7 Assistant Labour Welfare Officers.

One Labour Adviser was appointed from December 1942 to June 1943.

There is at present no Labour Adviser.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will they advise on dearness allowance ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: No. Sir.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Does the Labour Adviser, of the Honourable Member, as distinct from the Labour Welfare Adviser, represent the employees' interests.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Not at all. Sir.

109

Steps for Eliminating Immediate Causes of Industrial Disputes

298. **Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state what effective steps for eliminating the immediate causes of industrial disputes to ensure the unhampered war production have been taken so far, both in the Government's own war-factories and in private factories engaged wholly or partly on war-orders ?

(b) Have Government decided to adopt an all round policy of having all disputes referred to the adjudication before workers are compelled to go on a strike ?

(c) Do they propose to advise all Provincial Governments to do so?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Government have attempted to secure fair conditions for Labour both in their own factories and in private employment. Where disputes arise the methods of conciliation and adjudication are available.

(b) and (c) No. The general policy of Government is to resort to adjudication if and when the method of conciliation has failed. The present machinery for the settlement of disputes has been evolved in consultation with Provincial Governments and general uniformity of practice has already been achieved.

110

Demolition of a Mosque on Ashoka Road, New Delhi

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : I have received notice of motion of adjournment from Maulvi Abdul Ghani who wants to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the demolition of a mosque in the premises of quarter No. 9, Asoka Road, by the Government Officers and men of the Public Works Department. When did this take place ?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division : Muhamma-dan) : It

was done about ten days ago but I got information about it only last night.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member is not the only person interested. If it is an urgent public matter it is for every one to take notice of it immediately. Why was no notice taken before ?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural) : Sir, it did not come to the notice of any Member of the House until yesterday, because it was done in one of the Government quarters.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Then how did the Honourable Member come to know at all about it ?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : Some passers-by came and informed some Members and made a complaint.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Have Government anything to say about this ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I have had no notice of this motion. Evidently my Honourable friend wrote a letter giving notice of this adjournment motion to the Department of Education, Health and Lands, which has been just now handed over to me.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : I want to know the facts.

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : I have made inquiries from my Department and I am told that they do not know of any such incident at all. As I said, I have not had sufficient time to make inquiries in the matter, and I have no reason to suppose that any such demolition has taken place. However, if my Honourable friend chooses to put a short notice question. I will make inquiries and let him have the information he wants.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : I think that will be the best course.

Mr. H. A. Sathar **H. Essak Sail** (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan) : Then this motion can be held over.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : If a short notice question is put I will consider it later.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: In any case the short notice question cannot be put today and can only be asked on Tuesday if the Assembly sits till then.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Better ask a short notice question.

Demolition of a Mosque on Asoka Road, New Delhi

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) Whether he is aware of the existence of a Mosque in Asoka Road in Government Quarter No. 9 ;

(b) Whether the said Mosque has partly been demolished by Public Works

Department men at the instance of a Public Works Department Official;

(c) Whether the demolition work was stopped due to the agitation by Muslims;

(d) What steps the Government have taken to prevent such demolition and whether they have taken steps against the person at fault ; if so, with what result ; and

(e) What steps Government are going to take to remedy the harm done to the building ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes—of an old, dilapidated and unused mosque.

(b) No. One of the arches on the northern wing of the mosque accidentally collapsed while felling a tree against which it was leaning. The request for the removal of the tree came from the present occupant of the house-Major Anwar who complained that the tree was obstructing the light.

(c) No.

(d) There was no demolition by the Central Public Works Department, and so this question does not arise.

(e) It is an old dilapidated building, and no harm to it has, therefore, been caused.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : When the tree was cut, why the precaution was not taken to see that the area which was leaning against the tree might be kept in a safe condition ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to suppose that due precaution was not taken against such an accident.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : Even the efficient Engineers of the P. W. D. could not protect one arch ? Am I to take it with all due precaution, they were unable to protect one arch ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Such an accident may happen notwithstanding the due care and attention.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: When the mosque exists in a quarter which is occupied by the Government and which was open to the public before the Government built their quarter, is it not the duty of the Government to see that it is properly repaired and kept in proper order?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not suppose there is any reason to believe that this mosque was in actual use either before or after the quai was built.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan : Will Government give us an assurance that the demolished portion of the mosque will be restored by necessary repairs ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is quite unnecessary to do it because it was not used as a mosque nor is it a protected monument.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : Will the Honourable Member make a way for the public to get into this mosque ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As I said, it is no longer in use as

a mosque.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : May I know the reason why it is not in use as a mosque ?

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member is arguing.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I want to know whether the Government is going to make it accessible to the public so that it can be used as a mosque ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It has never been in use as a mosque.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan : Has the Government any objection if I carry out the repair at my expense ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member may make an application and the Department will consider it.

Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon : Is it not a fact that the occupant of this quarter did object to the cutting of the tree ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The position is just the reverse. The tree was cut at the instance of the occupant of the quarter.

Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon : Will the Honourable Member make a reference to the occupant of the quarter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to suppose that the information I have given is not correct.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan : What reason has the Honourable Member to suppose that the information given by an Honourable Member of this House is not correct ? Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : That is arguing.

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : I have official information. I don't know how reliable is the source of the Hon. Member's information.

112

The Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926 " The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

113

Equalisation of Rates of Allowance for Men and Women under the Indian War Injuries Scheme

47. Mr. N. M. Joshi : (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Labour Member been drawn to the fact that the difference made between the rates of allowances paid to men and women under the War Injuries Schemes in Great

Britain has been removed some time back so that men and women receive allowances at the same rates ?

(b) If the reply to the above be in the affirmative, do the Government of India propose to make a similar change in the Indian War Injuries schemes, and to bring the rates of allowances paid to men and women on the same level ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: (a) Since notice of this question was received, I have ascertained the position in Great Britain. It is a fact that the distinction between rates for relief for men and women has been abolished in Great Britain.

(b) The question will be considered.

114

Insertion in Government Contracts of Condition for Fair Treatment of Labour

48. Mr. N. M. Joshi : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether the subject of the need for insertion in Government contracts of a condition regarding fair treatment of Labour was discussed at one of the Tripartite Labour Meetings ? If so, what action do the Government of India propose to take on the subject ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, it was at the third meeting of the Standing Labour Committee. To be precise the subject discussed was need for insertion of a condition regarding fair wages for Labour in Government contracts, and not fair " treatment " of Labour. Government have already accepted the principle so far as the Central Public Works Department is concerned and the necessary preliminary steps for enforcing such a provision are under active consideration. The question or the introduction of such a clause in the contracts of other Government Departments will be taken up soon after the scheme has been introduced in respect of Central Public Works Department Labour.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: What is the meaning of " active consideration " ? Is there any time limit involved ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes; I see quite clearly the difference between a matter being under consideration and under active consideration.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee : Is there any difference of time ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That means that the matter is really nearing completion.

115

Rules Concerning " Out of Class " Allottees in New Delhi

49. **Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that before the introduction of the revised rules for allotment of residences in New Delhi during the war, persons who were allotted quarters were allowed as a concession to remain

in occupation of those quarters after they became out of class, when no accommodation of the class to which they were entitled was available ?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, what are the reasons for penalising the same occupants by the introduction of the proviso below rule 7 (2) (b) by relegating them to a junior position by treating the dates on which they became out of class as the dates of their posting ?

(c) Is it not a fact that by the operation of the proviso referred to in (b) above, the persons remain longer in occupation of the lower class of quarters and thus great hardship is caused to persons who are entitled to those quarters under revised rule 4 by compelling them to wait longer than it would be necessary had the proviso not been in operation?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to reconsider, and to remove the grievances of all concerned by deleting the proviso below rule 7 (b) under lists II and III.

(e) Does the Honourable Member realise that by the introduction of the new policy viz, determination of seniority as regards the claim for quarters by the total length of service, practically all new entrants to whatever class of quarters they were entitled will have to go without quarters and be put to great hardship ?

(f) With a view to redressing their grievance, does he propose to consider the feasibility of amending the rule so as to allow the counting of seniority from the date of posting in the case of new entrants who have not been allotted any quarter so far and in the case of others from the date on which they became out of class ?

(g) If the amendments suggested were accepted, will they be given immediate effect?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) The penalising arises more from the shortage of accommodation than from the proviso to rule 7(2)xx(b).

(c) Yes, but this cannot be helped under the existing circumstances.

(d) No. Nothing can remove the grievances unless there is increased accommodation at the disposal of Government, which does not seem to be possible so long as the war lasts.

(e) I do not consider that this is the case, but so long as the accommodation available is short of requirements, whatever rules are made, some persons are bound to be put to hardship.

(e) This is already provided for in the rules.

(g) Does not arise.

116

Supply of Foodgrains to Employees of the Labour Department in Bengal at Concession Rates

5. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be

pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices ?

(b) What is the total number of such employees and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last ?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to reply given by the Honourable the Food Member to starred question No. 55 on the 9th November 1943.

117

Certain Irregularities in the Working of the Payment of Wages Act

130. Mr. Laldian Navalrai : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to slate the number of irregularities detected by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, during the years 1939-40 and 1940-41, in the working of the Payment of Wages Act ? If there is an increase during the latter year, what steps do Government propose to take besides reporting to Railway administrations concerned to remedy this ? If none, why ?

(b) Will the Honourable Member please give a reference to the specific provision of the Payment of Wages Act, or rules framed thereunder, sanctioning the course of reporting irregularities to Railway administration instead of the authorities set up under Section 15 of the Act ?

(c) If there is no such provision, why is not action taken under Section 15(3) of the Payment of Wages Act by Labour Inspectors ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The number of irregularities detected during 1939-40 and 1940-41 were 3,012 and 4,158, respectively, Railway Administrations have recently been directed to take suitable steps to obviate the recurrence of these irregularities. If the irregularities continue to increase, the question of making formal applications under Section 15 of the Act will be considered. Government does not consider it necessary to proceed formally under the provisions of that Section when satisfactory settlement in the individual cases can be otherwise achieved.

(b) There is no such provision in the Payment of Wages Act or the rules framed thereunder.

(c) The provisions of Section 15(3) are not mandatory and there is nothing in the Act to prevent an Inspector from making reports to Railway Administration and getting any claims settled amicably.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : Have these Inspectors enough power to make recommendations ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi** : May I ask if these irregularities are found on the Company-managed railways or even on the State-managed railways ?

The Honourable Dr. **B. R. Ambedkar**: I must have notice of that question.

118

Activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways)

131. Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to refer to his reply to Mr. N. M. Joshi in regard to starred question No. 147 asked by me on the 19th February, 1943, stating that he would consider extending the field of activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways), and state whether any action has been taken in the matter ? If so, is it proposed to make a brief statement on the subject?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The question is still under consideration and I am not at present in a position to make any statement.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : What is delaying the consideration so much?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I said that the matter is under consideration.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : Why is it taking so long ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not think it has taken a long time.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee : When will it reach the stage of active consideration?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The stage of consideration is now complete.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh** : Since when has the matter been under consideration ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: For a long time and particularly since the time when Mr. Joshi asked his question.

119

Institution of Engineers

136. Mr. Ananga Mohan **Dam** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Institution of Engineers is an examining body whose diploma of A.M.I.E. is recognised by the Government of India as being equivalent to degree standard in Engineering;

(b) whether the Government (Central or Provincial) financially help this Institution ; if so, the amount of aid granted ;

(c) whether it is not a fact that the Institution has for its patrons and Honourary Members, Their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors;

(d) whether Government are aware that this Institution has obtained the

Royal Charter;

(e) whether it is a fact that sister Institutions in England, e.g., the Institute of Mechanical Engineers, the Institute of Civil Engineers, the Institute of Electrical Engineers, have not yet recognised the examinations conducted by the Institute of Engineers, India ; and

(f) if the Government of India propose to move His Majesty's Government to request these British institutions to accord recognition to this Indian Institution ? **The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** (a) Yes.

(b) The Central Government do not render any financial help to the Institution, but I have no information whether Provincial Governments do so or not.

(c) His Excellency the Viceroy and provincial Governors are Honorary Members of the Institution.

(d) Yes.

(e) Government have no information.

(f) It is for the Indian institution itself to raise the question, if necessary. I would, therefore, suggest to my Honourable friend that he addresses that Institution in the matter.

1.. A. DEBATES (CENTRAL) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

120

Constructing a Large Hotel for Indian Clerks in New Delhi

145. Sardar Sant Singh : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether Government have considered the advisability of constructing a large several storeyed building in New Delhi in the form of a big hotel in order to provide lodging and boarding facilities for Indian clerks who are otherwise put to considerable difficulties in obtaining these at present ?

(b) Is it a fact that many buildings have been constructed for the accommodation of European single non-commissioned Officers, etc., and that these are being run as hostels ?

(c) Are Government prepared to provide similar facilities for the Indian single clerks ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Government are considering the possibility of erecting a hostel for clerks.

(b) Yes.

(c) Government have already provided chummries of Orthodox and Un-orthodox types for Indian single clerks and they are considering whether there will be an adequate demand to justify the erection of a hostel.

121

Delay in Attending to the Complaints Made to Minto Road and Havetock Square Enquiry Offices, New Delhi

147. Sardar Sant Singh : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether Government are aware that complaints made to the

Enquiry Offices at Minto Road and Havetock Square regarding repairs, etc., to orthodox clerks quarters in those neighbourhoods are attended to generally after considerable delay ?

(b) Are Government aware—

(i) that some of these complaints are not attended to at all ; and (ii) that letters sent on the subject to the Executive Engineer, Construction III Division, or to other authorities in ' B ' Division, remain unacknowledged and without any action being taken on them?

(c) Are Government prepared to issue instructions to the authorities concerned to acknowledge all letters sent to them, and to take appropriate action thereon ? If not, why not ?

(d) Are Government aware—

(i) that a tot of inconvenience is being caused to their tenants by the irregular method adopted by the contractors regarding whitewashing, etc.;

(ii) that they send men round to the quarters and the tenants are asked to keep their rooms clear of furniture on a certain day, and then white-washing Labour is not sent for several days later; and

(iii) that when while-washing is finished the cleaning of doors and glass panes is not done at once, and the tenants are unable to arrange their houses for several days ?

(e) Are Government prepared to take action to redress these grievances of their tenants ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No.

(b) (i) No.

(ii) Action on letters received by Executive Engineers is taken at once and necessity is not felt of acknowledging all letters.

(c) Yes.

(d) (i), (ii) and (iii) No.

(e) Yes, Government intend issuing instructions to Executive Engineers to make frequent personal inspections.

122

Newly-Constructed E-Type Orthodox Quarters in the Open Space Between Baird Square East and Irwin Road in New Delhi

148. Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that a number of E-Type orthodox quarters have been constructed in the open space lying between Baird Square, East and Irwin Road in New Delhi ?

(b) Is he aware—

(i) that this area now looks very much like a congested portion of the city containing small gullies and lanes; and

(ii) that the present officials of the Central Public Works Department have totally ignored the original idea of the layout of New Delhi, and have made the said area very congested ?

(c) Is it a fact that it is proposed to construct more E-type orthodox quarters ?

(d) Are Government prepared to consider the advisability of constructing new quarters in such a manner that the " Clerks' residential areas " do not become more congested than they are at present, and that provision is made for lawns and open spaces near these quarters ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) (i) and (ii) No.

(c) Yes.

(d) Government have always acted in this manner.

123

Desirability of Closing Certain Passages in Havelock and Baird Squares New Delhi

149. Sardar Sant Singh : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that all the squares of D-type orthodox clerks quarters in the D.I.Z. Area of New Delhi had their four corners open as passage ?

(b) Is it a fact that these passages were closed later ?

(c) Was one of the reasons to protect the lawns in front of the quarters in those squares ?

(d) Are Government aware—

(i) that in Havelock and Baird Squares, B and C-type of quarters, there are passages after every two quarters except at the corners ; and

(ii) that coolies and Labourers use these passages regularly, and cross the lawns at different places with the result that the lawns in these two squares are disfigured by foot tracks ?

(e) Are Government prepared to have these passages closed and grass relaid on these tracks ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b) Yes.

(c) No.

(d) Yes.

(e) Government will examine the suggestion.

124

Growing of More Vegetables in Orthodox Quarters in New Delhi

150. Sardar Sant Singh: (a) With reference to the general appeal of Government to grow more food and vegetables, will the Honourable Member for Labour please state whether the Government of India staff living in New Delhi at orthodox type of quarters can grow vegetables in large quantities ?

(b) Is it a fact that the courtyards of D-type particularly, and of E, C and B-type orthodox quarters generally, are very small in size, and cannot be used to produce any large quantity of vegetables, etc. ?

(c) Are Government prepared to allot some extra land outside their

quarters to such members of their orthodox staff who may ask for it for the purpose of growing vegetables, etc., and to have such land duly enclosed ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Vegetables may be grown in small quantities for the domestic consumption of the staff occupying these quarters.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The proposal if accepted would soon result in destruction of lawns. Fencing is expensive and cannot be provided by Government, and it is unlikely that the staff living in these quarters will be able to make adequate use of such extra land.

125

Commissioned Officers in Civil Pioneer Force, United Provinces

29. Mr. **Piare Lall Kureel:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of commissioned officers (different ranks) so far recruited in the Civil Pioneer Force, United Provinces ;

(b) how many of them are Hindus, Muslims and members of the Scheduled Castes;

(c) how many of these commissioned officers have been promoted to higher ranks ;

(d) if any scheduled caste commissioned officer has so far been promoted to the higher rank ; and

(e) if the answer to (d) be in the negative, if Government propose to make such promotion now ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b) Twenty-five officers of commissioned rank have been appointed. The ranks and communities of the officers are—

	Muslims	Scheduled Castes	Others
Commandants			2 One Christian
Captains			2 One Christian
Lieutenants			7 Two Christian
2 nd Lieutenants	4	3	7

(c) Two Commandants and two Captains were appointed in those ranks on first commission. Seven 2nd Lieutenants have been promoted to the posts of Lieutenants.

(d) No.

(e) Promotion to higher rank can only be made within the authorised establishment of those ranks as vacancies become available. Subject to the authority of the Central Government, the power to make promotions is entrusted to the provincial Government. Except to prevent positive injustice

it is not considered desirable to interfere with the discretion of the Provincial Government in this matter, particularly as regards the higher posts. Promotions are regulated by two considerations (1) Efficiency and (2) Seniority. Since efficiency of the Unit must depend on the efficiency of its officers, efficiency must be the basis of promotion. But in case where efficiency is equal, seniority of service in the Force is also taken into account in making promotions.

126

Counting of Services of Commissioned Officers in Civil Pioneer Force as War Services

30. Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) whether the services of the commissioned officers in the Civil Pioneer Force will be counted as war services ; if not, why not ; and

(b) if the answer to (a) above be in the negative, if Government propose to revise their decision ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) Does not arise.

127

Beveridge Report for Post War Social Security

229. **Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban:** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the Beveridge Report for post-war social security ;

(b) whether they have any social security plan in view for India after the cessation of hostilities;

(c) whether, if the matter has not yet engaged their attention, they will take it up now with a view to evolving a plan similar to what is known as " Beveridge Plan " for this country ; and

(d) on what lines, if any, the Post-War Reconstruction Committee is working ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) It is not for the Government of India to consider the Beveridge Report submitted to the Government in the United Kingdom. The Government of India are, however, aware of the Report.

(b) and (c). I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the resolution on this subject passed at the last meeting in September, 1943, of the Tripartite Labour Conference. Copies of the resolution are placed on the table of the house. The Government of India is giving active consideration to the question of implementing the resolution.

(d) I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the statement laid on the table of the Council of State on the 4th August, 1943, by the

Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava in reply to question No. 74 by the Honourable Pandit H. N. Kunazru.

Resolution passed at the Tripartite Plenary Labour Conference held at New Delhi on the 6th and 7th September, 1943.

This Tripartite Labour Conference recommends that with a view to provide adequate materials on which to plan a policy of social security for Labour the Central Government in co-operation with the Governments of the Provinces of British India, the Indian States and the Chamber of Princes should immediately set up machinery to investigate questions of wages and earnings, employment and housing and social conditions generally, and that as soon as possible after receipt of the required statistics and data the Central Government should appoint a mixed Committee to formulate plans of social security.

128

Neglect of Lawns in Front of Orthodox Clerks' Quarters in D.I.Z. Area, New Delhi

232. Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that the lawns in front of orthodox clerks' quarters in the D.I.Z. area of New Delhi are not properly maintained ?

(b) Is it a fact that most of the ground is covered with dried up stunted grass ?

(c) Is it a fact that the roads bordering these lawns have almost in all cases lost their alignment, and that some portions of the road are covered with grass, while in other cases the grass has completely disappeared and is covered by bajri and soil?

(d) Is it a fact that there are malis regularly employed by the Horticultural Division to look after these lawns ?

(e) Is the Honourable Member aware that these malis water the lawns only once or twice a month and do not pay any attention to anything else ?

(f) Are Government prepared to take action to see that these lawns are properly maintained ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) No.

(d) Yes.

(e) The malis not only water the lawns but also keep them in proper order.

(f) The question does not arise, but Government will be prepared to enquire into any bonafide complaints on this subject.

Sardar Sant Singh : Has the Honourable Member simply given the reply on the note prepared by the Department or has he taken pains to see the conditions of these quarters to satisfy himself whether the allegations made in the question are correct or not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to suppose that the information supplied to me is not correct.

129

Operation of the Payment of Wages Act on East Indian Railway

236. Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi): Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of contravention of the Payment of Wages Act (Act IV of 1936), detected on the East Indian Railway during each of the years 1941, 1942 and upto the 15th October, 1943 ;

(b) the number of applications made to the authority appointed under section 15(1) of the Payment of Wages Act by the Inspectors for offences committed by the East Indian Railway authorities since the Act was brought into force in 1937; and

(c) the number of cases in which penalties were imposed under section 20 against the East Indian Railway Officers ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The number of cases of contraventions of the Payment of Wages Act on the East Indian Railway were 334 during 1941-42, 481 during 1942-43 and 123 from 1st April to 15th October 1943.

(b) Nil.

(c) Nil.

130

Operation of the Payment of Wages Act on East Indian Railway

237. Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that the Inspectors of Railway Labour have to obtain prior sanction from the Supervisor of Railway Labour for any action they may intend to take against offenders under the Payment of Wages Act ?

(b) If the reply to (a) above be in the affirmative, what is the number of instances when such permission was sought and sanction accorded relating to cases of contravention of the Payment of Wages Act on the East Indian Railway year by year from 1937 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) It is only the Supervisor of Railway Labour and his Deputy who have been appointed Inspectors under Section 14 of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, any formal action under the Act has therefore necessarily to be taken by these two officers and the question of taking their prior sanction does not arise.

(b) In view of the reply to part (a), this does not arise.

131

Operation of the Payment of Wages Act on East Indian Railway

238. Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that lack of effective and proper supervision of the conduct of the

Payment of wages Act is responsible for such frequent contravention of the Payment of Wages Act on the East Indian Railway ?

(b) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of making changes in the existing machinery with a view to affording proper and effective check on such contraventions of the Payment of wages Act by the Railway officers ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) What the Honourable Member suggests is not a fact. The very fact that such a large number of irregularities are brought to light every year and rectified at the instance of the Supervisor of Railway Labour proves the effectiveness of the Machinery which now exists for this purpose.

(b) Does not arise.

132

Representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik re War Bonus to Workers

239. Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh :** Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) if he has received a representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik, President, Central Provinces and Berar Provincial Workers' Federation, Nagpur, in the month of October, 1943, in connection with war bonus to workers;

(b) if Government have arrived at any decision regarding the condition attached to the additional war bonus by the Empress and Model mills, viz., the Government of India to decide whether more than two months' wages as war bonus can be treated as expenditure on which the company will have to pay no tax ; if so, what their decision is; and

(c) if he is aware of the decision of the Working Committee of the Central Provinces and Berar Textile Workers' Federation to go on strike from the 15th November, 1943, if the mill-owners in the Province will not pay this additional or second instalment of the war bonus by the 14th November 1943 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No. The general question of limitation of bonuses admissible as revenue expenditure is under consideration and it will not be expedient to give further details at the present stage.

(c) Yes.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh :** May I know the reasons why it would not be possible to arrive at a conclusion at an earlier date and give details ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We are doing our best to arrive at a conclusion as early as possible.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh:** What time it will take, because the withdrawal of the strike has been made under my instructions that the Government of India will decide this question and the strike had better be postponed ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am unable to give any detail.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether the Government of India is aware that there is very great discontent among the textile workers of Central Provinces

on account of the fact that the Government of India have not decided this question early ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on the point.

133

Students Admitted to Dhanbad School of Mines

242. Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

- (a) the number of students admitted to the Dhanbad School of Mines, and the number of Muslims therein during 1941, 1942 and 1943;
- (b) whether any quota is fixed for the admission of Muslims ; and
- (c) the total number of Muslims who applied for admission during the last three years ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) 24 students were admitted during each of the years 1941, 1942 and 1943. No Muslim student was admitted in 1941 and 1942. In 1943 two were admitted but one did not join the School.

(b) No ; and

(c) 34.

Dr, Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What is the reason for the non-admission of Muslim students ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is because they do not qualify themselves at the entrance examination,

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad ; As for academic qualifications I can prove that there are any number of Muslims who are fit to join that institution. But is it not a fact that scholarships are not given to Muslims ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar ; I cannot say ; I shall want notice of that.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani; Is it a fact that last year qualified Muslims applied but they were rejected outright?

The Honourable Dr, B. R. Ambedkar : No. If I may explain to the Honourable member, the method of admission to the school is that first of all 50 per cent. of the places are filled as a result of an entrance examination which is open to all students. After that a certain quota is filled for the purpose of representing each province according to a quota that has been fixed. After that the balance of students is taken purely on the basis of merit. At this school there is no reservation with regard to any particular community at all.